

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
California Department of Parks and Recreation
Empire Mine Fuelbreak Project
PDMC-PJ-09-CA-2003-022

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) has applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), through the State of California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), for a Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Program grant to implement a vegetation management project. The PDM Program assists states/territories and communities to implement sustained, pre-disaster, natural-hazard mitigation programs to reduce overall risk to the population and structures, while also reducing reliance on funding from actual disaster declarations. CDPR seeks FEMA funding to reduce future wildfire risks to Empire Mine State Park (Park) and surrounding communities. The project area is located in Nevada County, California, near the City of Grass Valley.

CDPR would create a shaded wildland fire fuelbreak in the Park to maintain a fire-safety zone that would not readily carry crown fire and would represent native forest conditions. CDPR would remove approximately 90 percent of the brush undergrowth and young conifers that are less than 6 inches diameter at breast height (dbh), mostly consisting of whiteleaf manzanita and small trees. Conifers of greater than 6 inches dbh and less than 10 inches dbh would be removed to reduce the basal area of conifers to less than 120 square feet per acre. All hardwood tree species of greater than 6 inches dbh would be retained throughout the project. Hand labor would be utilized to remove vegetation. Removed vegetation would be chipped and burned in piles onsite periodically during the fall and spring seasons. The proposed project would treat 653 acres of mixed coniferous forest and black oak forest within the Park over a 3-year period.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, FEMA has prepared a Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Empire Mine Fuelbreak Project (July 2005) to evaluate the impacts of the Proposed Action on the human environment. The SEA tiers from the Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Typical Recurring Actions Flood, Earthquake, Fire, Rain, and Wind Disasters in California (December 2003) as Proposed by FEMA. The PEA and SEA are available online at <http://www.fema.gov/ehp/docs.shtm>.

Based upon the conditions and the information contained in the PEA and SEA, and in accordance with FEMA's regulations in 44 CFR Part 10 (Environmental Considerations) and Executive Orders 11988 (Floodplain Management), 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), and 12898 (Environmental Justice), the following is concluded:

A Finding of No Significant Impact. Therefore, an environmental impact statement will not be prepared, based on the fact that there will be no long-term adverse impacts to the natural environment resulting from the Proposed Action. For more information, contact the undersigned at (510) 627-7027.


Alessandro Amaglio
Region IX Environmental Officer

JUL 20 2005

Date